

TARIFF.

MEMORIAL

OF

Citizens of Litchfield county, Connecticut, against the bill to Reduce the Duties on Imports.

FEBRUARY 11, 1833.

Read, and laid upon the table.

To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress assembled:

The memorial of the undersigned, citizens of the State of Connecticut,
RESPECTFULLY REPRESENTS:

That, within a few years past, relying on what they believed to be the settled legislation of the United States, many citizens of this State have invested large capitals in manufactures, which, after severe struggles and great sacrifices, are now active and prosperous, although, they are persuaded, affording no greater returns on the capital than that invested in other employments. These interests have become so extensive and diversified, so intimately interwoven with all other pursuits, and constitute in themselves so large a portion of the general industry, that their prostration, or even serious embarrassment, cannot fail of being attended with the most alarming consequences to the whole community. A vast amount of capital would be destroyed, thousands thrown out of employment, the wages of labor reduced, the value of agricultural products suddenly diminished, and consequently of land, and general embarrassment and distress ensue, from which no class would be exempt, and which no human caution or foresight could escape.

With these views, regarding their own interests and those of their fellow citizens of a large portion of the Union, your memorialists have been filled with alarm by the bill now pending in the House of Representatives for altering and amending the several acts relating to revenue, the principles of which, they cannot but regard as a sudden departure from what a majority of our citizens have considered as the settled policy of the country, and which, should they receive the sanction of Congress, would, they fear, bring upon your memorialists and their fellow citizens the appalling evils to which they have briefly alluded.

But your memorialists, unwilling to believe that Congress will sacrifice the extensive interests now at stake, when they can discover no emergency calling for, or affording any justification of, so cruel a measure, cannot but hope that the representatives of the people, vigilantly guarding the interests of the whole country, will pass no act altering or reducing the duties on foreign importations, which shall not afford the utmost security to all the essential manufacturing and mechanical interests of the country, consistent with the amount of revenue to be raised.

Your memorialists believe that the act of 1832, has been, and is approved by a large majority of the people of the United States, and, notwithstanding it is now apprehended by some that the rates of duties contained herein may produce a surplus of revenue, yet they believe it is due to public sentiment, as well as to the great interests concerned, that its provisions be permitted to take effect, that its operation may be known, and the amount of surplus, if any, ascertained. It will then be in season to provide for the reduction, when it can be done with more safety to the interests to be affected, and with the light which experience may throw upon its defects.

But if the duties must be reduced at this time, your memorialists earnestly pray that "equal and exact justice" may be extended to all, and that certain descriptions of manufactures may not be sacrificed, whilst others, having no greater claims to favor, are amply guarded; and be so adjusted and apportioned as will most effectually counteract foreign legislation and rivalry, and afford a reasonable and equal protection to all our important manufacturing and agricultural interests and employments.

Trusting that the wisdom and justice of Congress will be a sufficient safeguard against a hasty and uncalled for abandonment of a settled course of legislation, under the auspices of which such important and diversified interests have grown up; and that no act will receive its sanction that shall sacrifice the property, or take away the employment of your memorialists and others, which they earnestly commend to the care and attention of Congress; and as in duty bound, they will ever pray.